DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 482 325 RC 024 245

AUTHOR	Pewewardy, Cornel; Hammer, Patricia Cahape
TITLE	Culturally Responsive Teaching for American Indian Students. ERIC Digest.
INSTITUTION	ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools, Charleston, WV.
SPONS AGENCY	Institute of Education Sciences (ED), Washington, DC.
REPORT NO	EDO-RC-03-10
PUB DATE	2003-12-00
NOTE	14p.
CONTRACT	ED-99-CO-0027
AVAILABLE FROM	Archives at http://www.ael.org/.
PUB TYPE	ERIC Publications (071) -- ERIC Digests in Full Text (073)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	American Indian Culture; *American Indian Education; *Cultural Awareness; *Culturally Relevant Education; *Educational Environment; *Educational Needs; Educational Strategies; Elementary Secondary Education; Holistic Approach; Student School Relationship; *Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Expectations of Students
IDENTIFIERS	ERIC Digests; Transformative Education

ABSTRACT

Culturally responsive teaching cannot be approached as a recipe or series of steps that teachers can follow to become effective with American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students. Instead, it relies on the development of certain dispositions toward learners and a holistic approach to curriculum and instruction. This digest draws on a five-part conceptual framework first derived from the broader multicultural literature by Phuntsog and ties these concepts to recent research in AI/AN education. This framework reflects elements that researchers found to be crucial to culturally responsive education: (1) cultural literacy (teachers' knowledge of Native cultures and history and awareness of Native learning styles); (2) teachers' self-reflection and analysis of their own attitudes, beliefs, and stereotypes; (3) caring, trusting, and inclusive classrooms; (4) actions of the school that model respect for diversity, Indigenous knowledge, and alternative ways of knowing; and (5) a transformative curriculum that promotes critical thinking and the advancement of society toward equality of opportunity and social justice. (SV)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 482 325

Culturally Responsive Teaching for American Indian Students

Cornel Pewewardy and Patricia Cahape Hammer

EDO-RC-03-10 December 2003

This Digest makes the case that culturally responsive teaching cannot be approached as a recipe or series of steps that teachers can follow to be effective with American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) students. Instead, it relies on the development of certain dispositions toward learners and a holistic approach to curriculum and instruction. This Digest uses a five-part conceptual framework first derived from the broader multicultural literature by Phuntsog (1998), and ties these concepts to recent research in AI/AN education.

Culturally Responsive Teaching[1]

Interest in culturally responsive teaching grew during the late 1980s and early 1990s as a result of rapidly rising diversity in American classrooms and concern over the lack of success of many ethnic/racial minority students despite years of education reform. Researchers from various disciplines—anthropology, sociology, social history, psychology, and applied linguistics—launched various investigations, often employing case study methodologies (Martin, 1997). These investigations contributed to knowledge about the challenges minority students face and the social and linguistic mechanisms by which these students often are adversely affected when a discontinuity exists between their home languages and cultures and the schools they attend. For example, much was learned about student

CG 027 275

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Carole Berry

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

motivation, power relations, and resistance (Cummins, 1989; Ogbu, 1994); language and cognition (Bowman & Stott, 1994); culture and cognition (Sue & Padilla, 1990); and motivation and learning styles (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995), to mention only a small sample of this body of work.

Translating this knowledge into improved education practice and student outcomes began in earnest in the mid 1990s and remains an important challenge. After reviewing research and several efforts at translation, Phuntsog (1998, p.14) produced a framework that reflects critical elements researchers found crucial to culturally responsive education: 1) cultural literacy (Jackson 1994; Hudson, Bergin & Chryst, 1993); 2) self-reflective analysis of one's attitudes and beliefs (Novick, 1996; Sandhu, 1994); 3) caring, trusting, and inclusive classrooms (Jackson, 1994; Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995; Novick, 1996; Hemmings, 1994); 4) respect for diversity (Wldokowski and Ginsberg, 1995; Novick, 1996; Hemmings, 1994); 5) transformative curriculum to engender meaning (Wlodkowski and Ginsberg, 1995; Hemmings, 1994; Gormley, et al, 1995). Each of these elements has appeared in discussions of effective practice in AI/AN education and each recognizes the "central and critical role of the teacher in creating a classroom that respects diversity and ensures the self-worth of all children" (Phuntsog, 1998, p.14), as briefly discussed below.

Cultural literacy. According to Smith (1991), culturally responsive teaching uses the child's culture to build a bridge to

success in school achievement. Building such a bridge requires a degree of cultural literacy often absent in mainstream classrooms, where the vast majority of AI/AN students are taught by non-Native teachers. Some research has shown that where the students and teachers share the same culture, learning is enhanced (McCarty & Watahomigie, 1999; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982). This may be the result of AI/AN teachers' increased awareness of Native learning styles and ability to fine tune their teaching to their students' learning needs (Philips, 1983; Pewewardy, 2002). A logical way to address the need for cultural literacy in American schools is to develop a larger cohort of Native teachers (Manuelito, 2003). Another way may be to incorporate more American Indian studies courses into teacher education courses, where colleges and universities are training teachers to serve in schools with Indian students (Bergstrom, Cleary, & Peacock, 2003). Preservice teachers need to study the history and culture of Indian children including their values, stories, music and myths, as well as racism (Pewewardy, 1994).

Self-reflective analysis of attitudes and beliefs. Although Native studies courses can help, overcoming ethnocentric outlooks is hard work and must be viewed as an ongoing process. Teachers must learn to be reflective practitioners and develop observational, empirical and analytical skills necessary to monitor, evaluate, and revise continually their respective teaching styles (Pewewardy, 1994). Phuntsog (1998) acknowledges the challenge of engaging teachers in this process, which entails helping them to discover their own

negative assumptions and stereotypes. He writes, AIDED is crucial to provide teachers with powerful learning experiences designed to bring about profound personal transformation needed to begin the process of becoming culturally responsive teachers" (p. 4). Cleary and Peacock (1998) also make this point, encouraging teachers to see *themselves* as learners, to be open to considering differences between their own cultures and the cultures of the communities they serve, and to be willing to change their ways of teaching to give children a better chance in school. This transformative process is not limited to White teachers teaching Native students. Researchers Yamauchi, Ceppi, and Lau-Smith (2000) witnessed Native Hawaiian teachers undergo a transformation in their attitudes about their own Hawaiian culture after integrating Hawaiian language and culture into the curriculum of their school. Even Native teachers and community members must sometimes overcome negative attitudes (resulting from long-term deculturalization and colonization) toward the place of Native culture in the curriculum Manuelito (2003).

Caring, trusting, and inclusive classrooms. Teachers need not be experts in Native culture to provide an inclusive atmosphere in their classrooms. As one Native student commented,

> "Last year, I had . . . a history teacher, and I usually don't like my history teachers 'cause they never teach anything about Native Americans. I walked into the room and all I saw on his walls were pictures of Native American

people. And I think, "Okay, I'm going to like this guy" (Bergstrom et al, 2003, p. 162).

Kleinfeld (1975) in her case study research found that teachers who used a demanding but warm style of teaching with their Alaska Native students succeeded in challenging their intellectual abilities.

Also, a collection of studies concluded that group or cooperative learning approaches worked well with AI/AN students (Swisher, 1992; Brancov, 1994; McCarty et al, 1991; Larimore, 2000; Little Solder, 1988; Brancov, 1994). Such organizational arrangements are generally seen as providing a more inclusive and less individually competitive classroom atmosphere. Teachers act as mediators of knowledge, and provide assistance through the use of questions, feedback, and scaffolding-that is, building on students' prior knowledge.

Respect for diversity. Ultimately, the attitudes, beliefs, and actions of the school must model respect for cultural diversity, celebrate the contributions of diverse groups, and foster understanding and acceptance of racial and ethnic plurality. In order to authentically model such respect, the AI/AN community served by the school must be seen as an important source of knowledge and expertise (Cajete, 1994; Deloria, 2001). Falling under the rubric of *place-based education*, several programs have been underway that consciously work to connect students with Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing, and help them discover the relationship of this knowledge to modern sciences and social studies (Lipka & Mohatt, 1998; Sorensen, 2002). When schooling provides children with the knowledge, language, and

skills to function in the mainstream culture but also honors and provides opportunities for students to learn more about their Native language and culture from elders and others in the community, a true respect for diversity is demonstrated.

Transformative curriculum to engender meaning. According to Novick (1996), "at the heart of argument about the means and ends of schooling is the question: What kind of society do we want?" (p. 62; in Phuntsog, 1998). Most educators would respond that we want a society that continues to advance toward social justice and equality of opportunity; most would also recognize the role public education has been assigned in accomplishing those aims. Phuntsog (1998) found a great deal of consensus among educators and researchers writing about culturally responsive teaching that a transformative curriculum must be part of it because such a curriculum "promotes equity in classrooms as it questions the basic premises and assumptions of school knowledge. It is expected that a transformed curriculum will provide learning opportunities for children to enhance their critical thinking skills which enable them to analyze their situation and transform it with the language of possibility" (p. 14). In other words, it helps children become effective agents for social change (Banks & Banks, 1995).

In his book, *Look to the Mountain: An Ecology of Indigenous Education*, Cajete (1994) outlines key elements of American Indian perspectives on learning and teaching. He advocates developing a contemporary, culturally based, educational process founded upon

traditional tribal values, orientations, and principles, while simultaneously using the most appropriate concepts, technologies, and content of modern education. He explains that environmental relationship, myth, visionary traditions, traditional arts, tribal community, and nature-centered spirituality have traditionally formed the foundations of American Indian life for discovering one's true face (character, potential, identity), one's heart (soul, creative self, true passion), and one's foundation (true work, vocation), all of which lead to the expression of a complete life. For Cajete, Indigenous education is a process of education grounded in the basics of human nature. It can provide new ways of educating for ecological thinking and environmental sustainability, and has the potential, not only for the transformation of what is misnamed "Indian education," but also for profound applications toward transforming modern American education.

Conclusions

Teachers in a multicultural society need to hold an attitude of respect for cultural differences, know the cultural resources their students bring to class, and be skilled at tapping students' cultural resources in the teaching-learning process. While these attributes have always been needed, organizing schools to provide culturally responsive teaching may be a powerful tool in advancing the goals of No Child Left Behind. By reducing alienation of minority students and improving their motivation to learn, students and teachers work more effectively together to improve achievement.

It is our responsibility as American Indian parents and educators to develop educational settings (formal and informal) where cultural understandings (political, historical, literary, technological, financial, medical, legal and others) are not transmitted accidentally, but by design.

References

Banks, C.A. & Banks, J.A. (1995). Equity pedagogy: An essential component of multicultural education. *Theory into Practice, 34* (3), 152-158.

Bergstrom, A. Cleary, L.M. & Peacock, T. (2003). *The seventh generation: Native students speak about finding the good path.* Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

Bowman, B. T. & Stott, F. M. (1994). Understanding development in a cultural context: The challenge for teachers. In B. Mallory & R. New (Eds.), *Diversity and developmentally appropriate practices.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Brancov, T. (1994). Cooperative learning in mathematics with middle school Indian students: A focus on achievement and on-task behavior (Native Americans). *Dissertation Abstracts International,* 55(11), 3396A. (UMI No. 9506443).

Cajete, G. (1994). *Look to the mountain: An ecology of indigenous education. First edition.* Durango, CO: Kivak

Cleary, L. M., & Peacock, T. D. (1998). *Collected wisdom: American Indian education.* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Cummins, J. (1989). *Empowering minority students.* Sacramento: California Association for Bilingual Education.

Deloria, Jr., V. & Wildcat, D. R. (2001). *Power and place: Indian education in America.* Golden, CO: Fulcrum Publishing.

Erickson, F., & Mohatt, G. (1982). Cultural organization of participant structures in two classrooms of Indian students. In G. Spindler (Ed.), *Doing the ethnography of schooling: Educational anthropology in action* (pp. 132-174). New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston.

Gormley, K., McDermontt, P., Rothenberg, J. & Hammer, J. (1995). *Expert and novice teachers' beliefs about culturally responsive pedagogy.* Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association conference, San Francisco, CA, April 18-22, 1995. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED384599)

Hemmings, A. (1994). *Culturally responsive teaching: When and how high school teachers should cross cultural boundaries to reach students.* Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association conference, New Orleans, LA, April 4-8, 1994 (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 376242).

Hudson, L.M., Bergin D.A., & Chryst, C.F. (1993). Enhancing culturally responsive pedagogy: Problems and possibilities. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 20*(3), 5-17.

Jackson, F. R. (1994). Seven strategies to support a culturally responsive pedagogy. *Journal of Reading, 37* (4), 298-303.

Kleinfeld, J.(1975). Effective teachers of Eskimo and Indian students. *School Review, 83* (2), 301-44.

Larimore, C. K. (2000). When worlds collide: Native American students navigating dominant culture classrooms. *Dissertation Abstracts International, 61*(07), 2932A. (UMI No. 9979694)

Lipka, J., & Mohatt, G. V. (1998). *Transforming the culture of schools: Yup'ik Eskimo examples. Sociocultural, political, and historical studies in education.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED431565)

Little Soldier, L. (1988). *Sociocultural context and language learning of Native American pupils.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Association for Bilingual Education, Houston, TX. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED295503)

Manuelito, K. (2003). *Building a Native teaching force: Important considerations.* (ERIC Digest). Charleston, WV: ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools.

Martin, B. (1997). *Culturally responsive teaching: A review of research and literature.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED408387)

McCarty, T. L., & Watahomigie, L. J. (1999). Indigenous community-based language education in the USA. In S. May (Ed.), *Indigenous community-based education* (pp. 79-94). Great Britain: Short Run Press, Limited. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED432435)

McCarty, T. L., Wallace, S., Lynch, R. H., & Benally, A. (1991). Classroom inquiry and Navajo learning styles: A call for reassessment. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 22* (1), 42-59.

Novick, R. (1996). *Developmentally appropriate and culturally responsive education: Theory in practice.* Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory Program Report. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED397985)

Ogbu, J. U., & Simons, H. D. (1994). Cultural models of school achievement: a quantitative test of Ogbu's theory. Cultural models of literacy: a comparative study. Project 12. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED376515)

Philips, S. (1983). *The invisible culture: Communication in classroom and community on the Warm Springs Reservation.* New York: Longman. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED226878)

Pewewardy, C. D. (1994). Culturally Responsible Pedagogy in Action: An American Indian Magnet School. In Etta R. Hollins, Joyce E. King & Warren C. Haymon (Eds.), *Teaching Diverse Populations: Formulating a Knowledge Base.* Buffalo, NY: State University of New York Press.

Pewewardy, C. D. (2002). Learning styles of American Indian/Alaska Native students: A review of the literature and implications for practice. *Journal of American Indian Education,* 41 (3), 22-56.

11

Phuntsog, N. (1998). *The magic of culturally responsive pedagogy: In search of the genie's lamp in multicultural education.* Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (San Diego, CA, April 13-17, 1998). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED420632)

Sandhu, 1994

Smith, G. P. (1991). *Parameters of the Knowledge Base for a Culturally Responsible Pedagogy for Teacher Education.* Paper presented at AACTE, University of Northern Florida.

Sorensen, B. (2002). The Community-Based Education Model: Bringing Validity to Education and Careers. *Winds of Change, 17* (4), 60-62.

Sue, S. & Padilla, A. (1990). Ethnic minority issues in the United States: Challenges for the educational system. *Beyond language: Social and cultural factors in schooling minority students.* Sacramento, CA: Bilingual Education Office.

Swisher, K., & Deyhle, D. (1992). Adapting Instruction to Culture. In Jon Reyhner (Ed.), *Teaching American Indian Students.* Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Villegas, A. M. (1991). *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy for the 1990s and Beyond* (Trends and Issues Paper No. 6). Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Teacher Education.

Wlodkowski, R. J. & Ginsberg, M. B. (1995a). *Diversity & Motivation: Culturally Responsive Teaching.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Yamauchi, L. A., & Ceppi, A. K., & Lau-Smith, J. (2000). Teaching in a Hawaiian context: Educator perspectives on the Hawaiian language immersion program. *Bilingual Research Journal, 24* (4), 333-51.

Cornel Pewewardy (Comanche-Kiowa) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Teaching and Leadership, School of Education at the University of Kansas in Lawrence, KS.

Patricia Cahape Hammer is the director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools at AEL.

1.During the 1980s several terms emerged in the anthropology of education literature that describe these pedagogical strategies used by teachers in an effort to make the schooling experiences of American Indian students more compatible with their everyday lives. Those terms include *cultural congruence, cultural appropriateness, cultural compatibility, culturally sensitive, culturally aware, mitigating cultural discontinuity, culturally relevant, cultural synchronization,* and *cultural responsiveness.* The term *culturally responsive,* incorporates concepts embodied in all these descriptors but also connotes a more dynamic relationship between tribal (home or community) culture and school culture.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

[X] This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

[ ] This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").